

analysis of Children and Young People's Plans 2007



Edited by Mary Atkinson



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EMIE at NFER supports the sharing of information, expertise and good practice of information between local authorities on issues concerning education and children's services and disseminates research findings of relevance to practitioners.

Members of the EMIE team collected the documents used in this analysis and formed part of the project team.



The Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) for local government works for local government improvement so councils can serve people and places better.

The *Planning for Excellence* network was created by the IDeA in 2006 to enable those leading the planning of services for children and young people to share practice, concerns and to work together through mutual support. The network is open to anyone working on children and young people strategic planning in local authorities or partner organisations.

The network is jointly sponsored by IDeA and EMIE at NFER. A series of regional workshops, attended by representatives from local authorities, took place in November and December 2007. Key points from the discussions at these meetings are incorporated in this report.

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1 Introduction

Mary Atkinson

As from April 2006 all local authorities were required to prepare and publish a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) that will be reviewed annually. The plan is a strategic document, planning the coordination and development of services to deliver and improve outcomes for children: in effect, an overview of local agencies' activities to implement the requirements of the 2004 Children Act. In 2006, EMIE at NFER collected all the CYPPs and made them available on the EMIE website. NFER then published an analysis of a sample of 75 plans. This generated significant interest, and revised guidance on the review of the plans issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) incorporated recommendations from this study. Alongside this, the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) sponsored regional workshops for the local authority officers responsible for producing the plans, under the title 'Planning for Excellence' (PFE).

This report presents the findings of an analysis of the new or updated CYPPs published in 2007. The documents analysed, known variously as plans, reviews or refreshes, are collectively referred to throughout the report as CYPPs (for details of the different titles given by authorities to their updated CYPPs and the number of new plans and reviews in the sample, see page 26). Attendees at the PFE network workshops suggested that further analysis of the CYPPs should focus on topics of current relevance to local authorities. They, together with the Local Government Association (LGA), highlighted a particular interest in the commissioning process. The value of analysing the 2007 CYPPs in relation to the areas of safeguarding and looked-after children (LAC) was also raised. In addition, the analysis of the 2007 CYPPs examined their format and presentation in the same way as in 2006. This report therefore presents findings on:

- commissioning
- safeguarding
- looked-after children
- format and presentation.

It was also suggested at the PFE workshops that analysis of the plans should be combined with qualitative research examining the planning processes. A follow-up report detailing findings from local authority case studies focused on the planning processes is planned for later in the year.

About the sample and analysis

Analysis of the CYPPs with regard to their format and presentation was conducted on the 106 CYPPs from 2007 that were available to us at the time of the analysis. This was based on a similar study undertaken during the 2006 analysis.

The 2007 analysis for commissioning, safeguarding and LAC aimed to use plans and reviews from the same 50 authorities that were used for the first phase of the analysis of CYPPs in 2006, as this allows for comparisons to be made between the two years. It was decided to look at 50 plans rather than 75 because the analysis of 25 extra plans in the second part of the analysis in 2006 did not significantly affect the findings. At the time of the analysis, updated plans, reviews or refreshes were available for 46 of the 50 authorities used in 2006 (the plans for the remaining four authorities were unavailable). Some authorities submitted more than one document or additional appendices, which have been included in the analysis.



As far as possible, for each area examined, the analysis was conducted in similar manner and using the same coding frame used for the 2006 analysis, so that comparisons could be made between the CYPPs from 2006 and 2007. However, some aspects (for example, analysis of the priorities for LAC) were not analysed in 2006 and therefore it was not possible to make comparisons between the two years.

Local authorities' commentary on the findings

Some form of commentary from local authorities is provided within each section. These comments are presented in tinted boxes.

The commissioning section incorporates comments and issues raised by local authorities attending a series of PFE workshops, sponsored by IDeA and NFER, which were held during November and December 2007. During these regional meetings representatives from local authorities gave their views and shared their experiences relating to commissioning.

At the beginning of the safeguarding and LAC sections, the local authority commentary, provided as an overview of the findings, was written by Ian McGregor, IDeA Associate and member of the CYP regional improvement team. We are indebted to Ian for his contribution and support throughout this project.



2 Commissioning

Catherine Paterson

This section focuses on commissioning. It presents the findings from the analysis of the CYPPs and the findings from discussions which took place among local authority representatives at the PFE network meetings. Findings from the PFE network discussions are presented in tinted boxes.

Overall, over a half of local authorities referred to commissioning both in a separate section and throughout their CYPPs, whilst 21 referred to commissioning in statements throughout the document. Six CYPPs referred to further documents containing more information about commissioning. The plans referred to a number of different aspects of commissioning, presented here as:

- the commissioning strategy
- joint commissioning teams
- commissioning processes
- services and agencies being prioritised
- key groups being prioritised
- actions for taking the commissioning strategy forward
- resource allocation
- budgets
- challenges and benefits associated with commissioning.

The commissioning strategy

In 2007, just over half of the local authorities (compared to a quarter in 2006) wrote in their CYPP that their official commissioning strategy was developed and in place. Just under a half (as in 2006) wrote that their commissioning strategy was under development. Only one authority in 2007 (compared to a fifth in 2006) stated that their commissioning strategy was still to be developed. In 2006, a few authorities made no mention of commissioning.

Whilst the majority of authorities made no reference to the model they would be using for commissioning, a few authorities provided some details. One authority, for example, wrote that they would be using the nine steps of the Every Child Matters (ECM) joint planning and commissioning framework and two stated that they would be using an adapted version of this model.

The CYPPs were examined to ascertain where authorities had made reference to a joint or multi-agency commissioning strategy. This revealed that about a third referred to a multi-agency and joint commissioning strategy throughout all or most of the strategy, whilst almost half did so within some of the commissioning strategy. However, within eight plans, reference to a joint or multi-agency commissioning strategy was not apparent.

The plans were also examined for evidence of references to the voluntary and community sector (VCS) within the commissioning strategy. In about a quarter of the plans, reference to the VCS and alternative providers was apparent in all or most of the commissioning strategy. In over a third, reference to the VCS and alternative providers was apparent within some of the commissioning strategy. Reference to the VCS was not apparent in the commissioning strategy in around a third of the plans.





PFE discussion

Around half the authorities represented in the PFE network discussions said their authority had a strategy or draft strategy in place or were in the process of producing one, whilst only two specifically stated that they did not have a strategy yet (reflecting the findings of the research into the plans themselves). Examples given included a commissioning strategy which was described as ‘a framework, with a good set of principles, underpinned by a three-year plan’. This authority was planning to have developed a fully-fledged commissioning service by 2010. A smaller authority described having an ‘approach to commissioning’ document rather than a strategy.

Joint commissioning teams

Over half of the 46 CYPPs referred to an overall/single joint commissioning board as already in place or under development. Eighteen local authorities gave details of the representation on the Joint Commissioning Team. These included the following (number of occurrences shown in brackets):

- Primary Care Trust (PCT) (13)
- council or local authority (11)
- Children’s Trust (4)
- Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership (3)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) (1)
- voluntary and community sector (1).

Nineteen authorities gave examples of other commissioning teams, including substance misuse commissioning teams (in three plans), CAMHS commissioning teams (in two), parenting (in two) and sexual health (in two). Services and organisations or individuals represented in the other commissioning teams included children and young people, arts and cultural services, environmental services, youth services, CAMHS, the vulnerable children’s division, schools, the PCT and children’s centres.



PFE discussion

Representatives from about half of the authorities involved in the PFE network discussions said that they had set up a commissioning team or unit or are in the process of doing so. In some cases, this was headed by a specific Head of (Joint) Commissioning for Children’s Services, whilst in others, the PCT Director headed up the commissioning team. One authority was considering commissioning for children, headed by a senior manager and a parenting commissioner. A virtual commissioning team was proposed in some cases.

It was also evident that the structure for commissioning was influenced by the size of the authority. An example was given of a small authority in which the commissioning



steering group feeds directly into the partnership and there is therefore no need for a joint commissioning team. Some authorities reported taking a phased approach to commissioning. In one case, for example, an authority had focused on children and young people with complex needs as a priority for commissioning in the first instance.

Commissioning processes

Nearly two-thirds of the authorities gave details of how they would be commissioning. According to their CYPPs, 23 authorities were going to be commissioning by service, five by ECM area, three by level of need and one by key group. Over a third of the authorities specified the geographical levels at which they would be commissioning, some specifying more than one level. Ten authorities wrote that they would be commissioning at sub-regional or local/district level, two at regional level and one at micro level (that is, at individual practice/professional level). Eight wrote that they would be commissioning jointly with other authorities or across authorities.



PFE discussion

Locality commissioning was widely discussed at the PFE meetings. Representatives from several local authorities specifically mentioned that their authorities commissioned by locality or clusters, or that they were planning to move to such a model. It was suggested that commissioning is easier within localities as they are small and compact geographical locations. This was backed up by other comments. For example, a large county council reported that it was hard to engage partners because of its size. Other geographical features were also cited, such as all the deprived areas falling on one side of the county. One authority representative stated that it is necessary to understand both the locality's and the local authority's priorities.

Services and agencies being prioritised

In 2007, all but one of the CYPPs specified services or agencies that would be prioritised within their commissioning strategy. These included the following (number of occurrences shown in brackets):

- CAMHS (30)
- PCTs (25)
- parenting services (16)
- council or local authority (14)
- Connexions (11)
- schools (11)
- youth services (10)
- early years services (10)



- youth offending (9)
- housing (7)
- child care services (6)
- social services (5).

In 2006, the most frequently prioritised services/agencies were PCTs, CAMHS and schools, voluntary and community organisations. In 2007, the VCS were highlighted in 14 plans as agencies to be prioritised and 30 plans stated that the VCS would be involved in the commissioning process. Specific examples of their involvement included authorities commissioning work with Barnardo's, parenting services and children's advocacy services.

In around a third of the plans, authorities wrote that parents and families would be involved in the commissioning process. In around a quarter it was stated that children and young people would be involved in the process. In five plans, other individuals or agencies were cited as being involved in the process. Four CYPPs stated that GPs would be involved in the commissioning process.



PFE discussion

Representatives from several authorities talked about areas in which commissioning had been set up or was going to be set up in their authorities. Around a third of representatives identified CAMHS. Other services included those related to the Children's Fund, early years, complex needs, school places, Connexions, Building Schools for the Future, ante-natal services, extended services and parenting services. A major issue for authorities with regard to VCS involvement was the conflict of interest between being involved in commissioning and being commissioned. Other issues included the lack of VCS involvement and the assumption that the VCS would be commissioned to provide services (and therefore a lack of effort on their part to source funding), as well as their focus on grants.

Key groups being prioritised

Forty-two of the 46 plans in 2007 specified key groups that were being prioritised in the planned commissioning strategy. These included (with number of occurrences shown in brackets):

- looked-after children (LAC) (32)
- substance misusers, or children of substance misusers (25)
- children/young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (24)
- pregnant teenagers/young mothers (18)
- vulnerable groups (unspecified) (13)
- young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) (6)
- young carers (5)
- black and minority ethnic (BME) groups (5)
- homeless children and young people (3)
- asylum-seekers and refugees (2)
- young people not in mainstream school (2).



The key groups prioritised do not appear to have varied significantly from 2006, when the groups being prioritised were: children with learning difficulties or disabilities, LAC, substance abusers, vulnerable groups and teenage mothers.

Thirty-six CYPPs specified other key areas for commissioning. These included (number of occurrences shown in brackets):

- health and wellbeing (for example, exercise and anti-obesity programmes) (16)
- sexual health (15)
- prevention and early intervention (13)
- speech and language therapy (7)
- bullying/behaviour (6)
- domestic violence (6)
- maternity services/midwifery (6)
- respite care (5)
- positive activities (4).



PFE discussion

Key groups identified as priorities for commissioning at the PFE discussions included children and young people with substance misuse problems, pregnant teenagers, LAC, vulnerable groups and children with disabilities. A few local authority representatives said they were moving towards prevention and early intervention models, with one highlighting that the move to prevention and early intervention was one of the benefits of commissioning.

Actions for taking the commissioning strategy forward

In their CYPPs, almost three-quarters of the 46 authorities identified tangible, focused or differentiated actions with regard to taking their commissioning strategy forward. These actions are presented, in order of frequency, in Table 1.



Table 1 Taking the commissioning strategy forward: actions and examples from the plans

Action	Example
Developing activities related to needs analysis	Findings from the pan-Berkshire needs assessment will be used to inform future commissioning of substance misuse services. (Bracknell Forest)
Developing further capacity for commissioning	Joint approaches to commissioning have been developed for CAMHS and a draft strategy has been developed for extending joint arrangements to other services, to be implemented during the life-time of this plan. (Greenwich)
Moving towards prevention and early intervention models	The personal safety aspects of children in care, care leavers and families continue to have special attention through, for example, specialist substance misuse workers working within the Children and Young People's Service (CYPS), commissioned through the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT), and form part of our commissioned services for young people which provides targeted interventions to those most at risk of substance misuse. (Haringey)
Developing further consultation with children, young people, parents and families	[We will] ensure that all projects commissioned through the Youth Service and PEEPS (Young People's Educational and Empowerment Programmes) Panel and the Children's Choice Awards will promote young people's participation. (Hounslow)
Developing contractual, procurement, financial and legal aspects	[Value for Money] forms a cornerstone of our commissioning approach: for example, financial projections based on market intelligence ensure that VFM is achieved in unit prices. Whilst this is not currently systematic in provided services, our commissioning framework will be introducing this approach. (Plymouth)
Developing monitoring, evaluation and performance review	[We will establish] the sum total of local resources dedicated to the achievement of the ECM outcomes for children, young people and families and ensure that these are used effectively to improve outcomes and there are appropriate reporting mechanisms to monitor its spend against agreed commissioning priorities. (Southampton)
Developing further consultation with/involvement of other users	A very high proportion of Bexley LAC contribute to their LAC reviews: this figure stands at 90% in 2006/07. Carers attend and contribute to reviews and planning processes for LAC. There is an independent advocacy and Children's Rights service for LAC regardless of geographical placement; this provision is commissioned from a voluntary organisation to ensure independence. (Bexley)
Developing activities related to service mapping	In addition, each CYPP priority commissioning plan has a section which maps current service provision, thresholds and how this needs to change over the next three years to better balance reactive and preventative services. (Portsmouth)
Developing a multi-agency partnership strategy and approach to commissioning	Better coordination and commissioning of services for children and young people experiencing domestic violence through the development of a multi-agency action plan. (Bournemouth)





PFE discussion

Around half of local authorities present at the PFE network meetings discussed the plans they were considering carrying out in the future, and half of these involved focusing on local needs. Specific intentions, for example, included aspiring to a model that sits around the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) as a joint commissioning unit, with some additional data analysis functions, by merging the performance, planning and strategy team with the Joint Commissioning Unit. Another authority intended to replace a joint commissioning group for drug and alcohol misuse, which currently represents both providers and commissioners, with a unit just for commissioners. Other authorities talked about not commissioning in April 2008, but renewing contracts in October 2008, when budgets are known. They also talked about sharing equipment, resources and buildings as part of commissioning, consulting parents on what they want from schools and developing school profiles that are about more than just achievement. There was also speculation that local authorities might become solely commissioning bodies in the future. The need for the CYPP and local area agreements (LAAs) to be seen as commissioning plans was also highlighted.

Resource allocation

Just over a half of the 46 local authorities referred to resources in a separate section and throughout the CYPPs, whilst just under a half referred to resources in statements throughout the document. Two CYPPs referred to further documents with more information about resources. In 26 cases, resources were identified and allocated in detail. In 20 cases, general statements about the resources were made.

Nearly two-thirds of the plans cited how budgets were allocated. In 23 cases (over three-quarters of those who cited how budgets were allocated), budgets were allocated to services, in seven cases, they were allocated according to level of need and in one case, they were allocated by ECM outcome area. In 20 cases, the authorities named specific priorities for resources, including children with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) or special educational needs (SEN), prevention, CAMHS, LAC, early years, parenting or Building Schools for the Future.

Budgets

Within the plans, local authorities referenced the following aspects related to budgets:

- alignment of budgets
- pooling of budgets
- re-routing or redirecting budgets
- grants/additional income.

Nearly two-thirds of the CYPPs referred to **alignment of budgets**. In 16 cases, alignment was associated with budgets, figures and resources, whilst in the other 13 it was identified as an area to be addressed in the future. Areas for alignment included CAMHS, parenting services, 14–19 and SEN. The PCT, council and voluntary sectors were among the partners named for aligning budgets. There was some suggestion that alignment was easier than pooling budgets:



Commissioning budgets from the partner agencies will generally be aligned rather than pooled to allow for ease of accounting.

Bradford

Over three-quarters of the CYPPs referred to **pooling budgets**. In 24 cases, this was associated with budgets, figures and resources, whilst in 11 cases it was identified as an area to be addressed in the future. Twenty authorities specified areas, or possible areas, for this, including CAMHS, LDD or SEN and safeguarding. Partners specified included the PCT.

Thirteen CYPPs referred to **re-routing or redirecting budgets**. In eight cases this was identified with budgets, figures and resources. In five plans it was identified as an area to be addressed in the future. Six authorities cited areas for this, including SEN or LDD, prevention and intervention, parenting, LAC and CAMHS.

All but six of the plans cited one or more specific **grants or forms of additional income**. Over 50 examples of grants were given. The most common included (in order of frequency):

- DSG
- sure start/early years grants
- CAMHS grant
- EMAG
- Standards Fund
- children's services grant
- Youth Justice Board grant
- teenage pregnancy grant
- carer grant.



PFE discussion

It was suggested in the PFE discussions that, in some cases, pooling budgets is too complex so authorities prefer to align budgets. In addition, whilst the money is put in a central fund, the authority maintains control over the amount. Aligning budgets was reported to have been successful in services for children with disabilities from 0–25 years with integrated services, including mental health, acute services, a development centre, social care and Connexions. Several local authorities stated that they currently pool or are planning to pool budgets. Around half of authorities who said they were considering pooling, planned to do so with the PCT. A member of a PCT who attended the workshop said that his organisation was happy to pool or align budgets. Services operating from pooled budgets or for which pooled budgets were being considered, included disability services, CAMHS, parenting services and services for vulnerable children. One authority was commissioning programmes of work for schools through pooled budgets with the view that this would avoid duplication and assist service delivery. In another authority, the pooled children's services and PCT budget for the placement of LAC who have complex needs was felt to be a benefit. Members of two authorities stated that they did not pool budgets but that they had joint appointments and another authority was considering pooling building space and human resources to achieve a consistent approach to parenting support. Reservations about pooling expressed by others focused on lack of confidence within the authority, lack of trust across organisations and the lack of a shared vision or perspective with other services.





PFE discussion: challenges and benefits associated with commissioning

The discursive nature of the PFE discussions elicited a number of challenges associated with the commissioning process which were not identified within the plans. These challenges were grouped into the following areas:

- **Definitions:** Throughout discussions, local authorities raised the need for a clear definition of commissioning; they also asked that related terms, such as strategic commissioning and procurement, were clearly set out. There were also reported to be different meanings within different agencies. One authority had employed a consultant to assist with explaining and defining commissioning.
- **Children's services/Children's Trusts:** The need for children's services to be more fully integrated and for there to be greater stability before commissioning can be effective was highlighted, coupled with some uncertainty about the longevity of Children's Trusts.
- **Organisational cultures:** Differences in the experiences of commissioning within different agencies were highlighted; agencies/services were sometimes reported to be reluctant to engage in joint commissioning due to territoriality and feeling that their areas of responsibility were being taken away. A reluctance to work outside of the comfort zone was also noted.
- **Resource issues:** Complications relating to funding, grants and budgets were identified, as were also staff recruitment and training issues. Dependence on key personnel (for example, staff leaving as a result of reorganisation without sharing information) was also raised. Two local authorities were considering a workforce development day for staff involved in commissioning and another planned to recruit a joint commissioning officer to support and develop joint commissioning skills.
- **Lack of good practice examples:** A lack of time for monitoring and scrutinising the process had led to the failure to replicate successes gained in some areas in other areas. It was questioned whether the examples of commissioning on the ECM website lend themselves to being rolled out over local authorities. Suggestions as to where examples of good practice could be found included the work of the Children's Trust pathfinders and case studies from local authorities graded 4 in their Annual Performance Assessment (APA).
- **Relationships with other agencies:** Working with other agencies was reported to be sometimes problematic, for example, one authority had found working with six PCTs a problem, although PCT restructuring had helped overcome such barriers. It was suggested that all managers involved in joint commissioning should sign up to Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and that better strategic analysis would help.

Despite the number of challenges identified, the overall view was that authorities are beginning to see benefits from commissioning services, although, in many cases, it is too early to produce evidence of this. One authority representative, for example, felt that a benefit of commissioning was that CAMHS has now coordinated service delivery and that they were now spending separate budgets from individual agencies to achieve shared outcomes and targets. Another stated that a reduction in re-offending had been demonstrated through an evaluation of the youth inclusion and support panel. Many local authorities had experience of decommissioning services and examples were given of where this had been effective (such as a drugs service, parenting support and Children's Fund service).



3 Safeguarding

Megan Jones

This section presents the findings from the analysis of safeguarding within the 2007 CYPPs from 46 local authorities. It sets out how safeguarding features in this sample of plans and includes illustrative examples. Areas covered are:

- priorities
- actions
- key groups
- targets
- lead agencies.



Overview commentary

Given the prominence of safeguarding within the ECM legislation, it is to be expected that the CYPPs would prioritise the theme and report that Local Safeguarding Boards were operational. Whatever the way that the theme is covered within the plan, the actions described seem to cover a mixture of improving structures and processes, improving provision or providing specific initiatives targeted at particular vulnerable groups. By far the greatest reference was to children and/or families affected by domestic violence, abuse and drug misuse. Perhaps rather surprisingly, some of the actions for 2007/08 are still to do with setting up systems or provision for such groups. Prevention as a sub-theme does not feature as explicitly as might be expected. There are good examples of actions to further develop, reconfigure or expand successful initiatives from year one of the plan. There is also some evidence of actions being pointed towards the improvement of specific national indicators. The research suggests that plans could be clearer about the context or quantification for some targets. Overall, it is striking how many actions are being taken jointly with partners and how wide-ranging are the initiatives being undertaken within this theme.

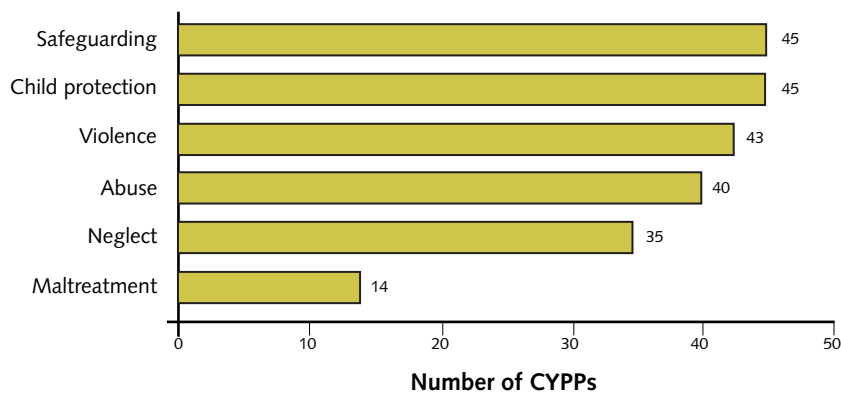
Priorities

The analysis shows that, across the CYPPs, safeguarding was mentioned as a priority area in all but one of the plans for which there was a 2007 update. In six plans, safeguarding was given its own priority section; in about three-quarters of the sample safeguarding appeared within the 'Stay safe' ECM area; in three plans safeguarding was covered in another part of the plan, and in one plan safeguarding appeared under all five ECM areas.

Figure 1 shows the coverage of safeguarding priority areas in the plans. Within safeguarding, **child protection** is most commonly cited, closely followed by **violence** and **abuse**. **Maltreatment** receives less emphasis, being least frequently covered as a priority area.



Figure 1 Coverage of safeguarding priority areas in CYPPs



Within the plans, safeguarding priorities appeared in the following sections (number of occurrences shown in brackets):

- ‘Stay safe’ (43)
- service management (14)
- introduction/overview or under key achievements (11)
- ‘Be healthy’ (7)
- ‘Make a positive contribution’ (6)
- ‘Enjoy and achieve’ (3)
- elsewhere, for example in its own safeguarding section (3).

All authorities reported that they had a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in operation at the time of publication of their respective plans.

Actions

This section looks at the actions completed since 2006 and actions for the future. Across the 46 plans, a variety of actions were specified in relation to safeguarding.

Actions completed since 2006

All but one of the 46 plans specified a variety of completed actions from the 2006 CYPPs in relation to the ‘safeguarding’ arena. Examples of actions completed since 2006 are presented in Table 2.



Table 2 Actions completed since 2006 and examples

Action	Example
Developed and/or implemented policies, procedures or systems	A multi-agency protocol and interim practice for managing Domestic Violence referrals was ratified by the Doncaster Safeguarding Children Board in July 2006. (Doncaster)
Increased collaborative and cross-agency working between professionals	There are strong links between the Bury Safeguarding Children Board and the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership. Agreement has been reached with partners to provide a budget to take forward development work to 2008. (Bury)
Developed education and training for professionals	Training has been delivered to staff within key agencies including Safeguarding and Social Care services, Youth Offending Service (YOS), CAMHS, Attendance Advisory Service (AAS) and Connexions to support them in the process of undertaking screening with their client group to identify substance-related need. (Greenwich)
Developed and/or implemented a Local Safeguarding Children Board	An independent chair and manager have been appointed to lead the work of the Hertfordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (HLSB) and business and communications plans are now agreed and in place to promote the HLSB's roles and responsibilities. (Hertfordshire)
Developed and/or implemented strategies, initiatives or services	We have also launched a Domestic Violence Strategy, which is led by the Safer Communities in conjunction with key partner organisations including the Local Safeguarding Children Board. (North East Lincolnshire)
Developed new services or teams	We have restructured our mainstream social care services to make them more efficient, by providing dedicated teams for looked-after children, specialist teams for children in need and those aged 16+ and a single referral and assessment team. We have worked with the Home Office to create an Intake Team at the airport to support age assessments and deal with safeguarding issues, provided a new Intensive Family Support Service and increased the number of permanent staff in our asylum service. (Hillingdon)
Conducted planning, reviewing, mapping or auditing	The child protection advisors have audited all cases of children removed from the register in the year to monitor the quality of decision making and outcomes. (Haringey)
Instituted awareness raising and promotion of issues and/or strategies and initiatives	A comprehensive and planned approach to public education co-ordinated by the LSCB Public Education Sub-committee, including the co-sleeping campaign, Home Alone and awareness leaflet about safeguarding distributed to all households. (Southampton)
Developed recruitment and employment practices	Taxi drivers on contract for school transport are subject to Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks and monitored by the LSCB Business Manager. (Plymouth)
Developed education and training for schools	Over 12,000 teaching and school staff have received bespoke child protection/safeguarding training: some 97% of the total requiring training. (Oxfordshire)

Analysis of the 2007 plans revealed that actions relating to 'the development and/or implementation of policies, procedures or systems' (which is the most frequently identified action) had been completed more than twice as often as any other type of action.



Actions planned for 2007/08

The top ten actions most commonly identified in the 2007 CYPPs are presented, in rank order, in Table 3.

Table 3 Actions planned for 2007/08 and examples

Action	Example
Developing and/or implementing policies, procedures or systems	Set up systems to deal with allegations. (Gloucestershire)
Planning, reviewing, mapping or auditing	Reduce the level and the harm of domestic violence, and ensure early and proactive support to victims and their families – Project Management Board has been set up to review local arrangements. (Lewisham)
Developing new services or teams	In 2007/08 we will establish a Commissioning Support Team to support the Improve Wellbeing Board and LSCB, to implement the Commissioning Strategy ensuring a standardised approach to commissioning using the DfES nine-step commissioning framework. (Gateshead)
Developing and/or implementing strategies, initiatives or services	Implementation of Integrated Domestic Abuse Programmes. (Essex)
Establishing baseline and/or monitoring and evaluation	Establish a robust baseline position of neglect cases within Social Care at 31st March 2007 and work towards a 6% reduction by March 2008 and a further 9.1% reduction by March 2009. (Halton)
Developing education and training for professionals	We will continue to provide a multi-agency training programme to raise awareness about domestic violence (DV) and will be piloting a DV Court during the forthcoming year. (Hillingdon)
Developing awareness raising and promotion of issues and/or strategies and initiatives	Publication of inter-agency protocol on supporting children and young people subject to domestic abuse. (Northamptonshire)
Increasing collaborative and cross-agency working	The police are establishing multi-agency arrangements to identify and review high-risk cases. (Surrey)
Involving children and young people, or working with children and young people	We will engage in a number of strategies to enable us to achieve this [Safeguarding and Partnerships Service Improvement Plan], such as developing a baseline of all schools engaged in mentoring and buddying schemes, and gaining the views of children and young people. (Oldham)
Developing education and training for schools	We have incorporated Safer Recruitment training into the general recruitment training offered to schools and embedded Level 1 safeguarding training into the Teaching Assistant and NQT induction programme. We encourage all headteachers to make use of the National Council for School Leadership (NCSL) online safer recruitment training package. (West Berkshire)

Planned actions around ‘working with, and the involvement of, children and young people’ did not appear in the top ten actions in the analysis conducted for the 2006 CYPPs, suggesting that this is a new area of concern for local authorities, at least with regard to safeguarding. The least frequently referenced action for 2007/08 was ‘providing education and training for children and young people’.

Those actions that were least commonly cited in the 2006 analysis for ‘Stay safe’ (‘activities to improve and/or support the transition to adult services’ and ‘maintaining, extending and/or



improving support to foster parents and/or adoption parents’) did not appear at all as safeguarding actions in 2007/08.

Other actions cited in relation to safeguarding are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Other actions cited in relation to safeguarding

Action	Example
For children and young people	
Maintaining, extending and/or improving support to children and young people	A pilot support programme has been set up and is currently being delivered to children who have been affected by domestic violence. (West Berkshire)
For parents, carers and families	
Maintaining, extending and/or improving support to families, parents and/or carers	A Family Centre will open in July, which has been developed in partnership with Barnardo’s and will target services to families with children on the child protection level. Services provided by the Centre will include parenting support and therapeutic interventions. (Brent)
Developing education and/or training for parents and carers	Development of a model of training with parents around safeguarding issues, based upon the Derby Model. This will be a joint venture between the Halton Local Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) and the Alliance Board. (Halton)
For schools	
Developing education/curriculum	Schools programme ‘Challenging Attitudes to Violence’ being again delivered to a number of schools, and academic evaluation undertaken. Reintroduction of the ‘Invisible Dimension’ resource pack for schools. Leeds Domestic Violence resource pack has been provided and given to all schools. (Liverpool)
Maintaining, extending and/or improving support for schools	Safer Community Teams (and other police colleagues where appropriate) to provide intensive short-term support to individual schools in response to particular need, such as increased levels of crime or anti-social behaviour. (Northamptonshire)
Resources and ICT	
Developing resources	The Invest to Save strategy and the Freeman Family Centre will increase resources to children and young people in need of protection and will improve the quality of services provided to children who require safeguarding and those who become looked after. (Brent)
Developing information systems (ICT)	Put in place the Integrated Children’s System (ICS) to access child protection information, phase out the child protection register. (Greenwich)
For services	
Developing recruitment and employment practices	Develop a full-time post to work with schools and extended services on safeguarding. (Bury)
Developing early intervention and prevention work	Reduce the need for child protection referrals through greater emphasis on preventative work with families. (Hertfordshire)
Developing information signposting or information provision	Publish a directory listing all the services that are available for children and young people. (York)



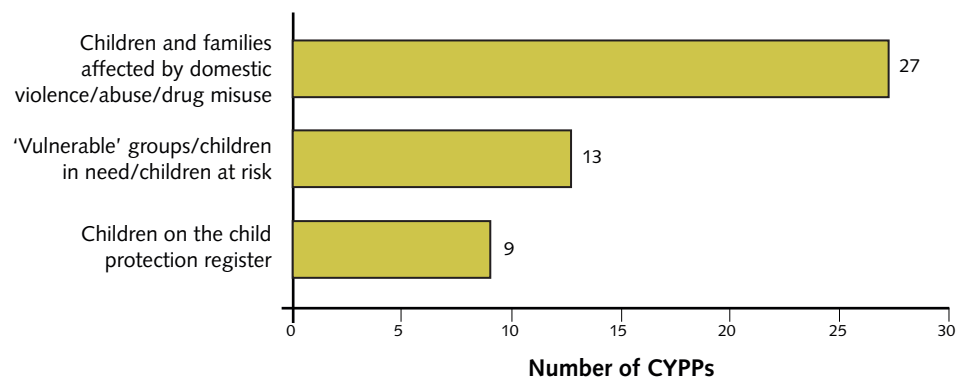
Table 4 Other actions cited in relation to safeguarding *continued*

Action	Example
Developing panels, committees, working groups and/or sub-groups	A task group is being set up to develop local guidance and ensure our learning and development plans are addressing learning needs in this area. (Greenwich)
Commissioning specialist services	We are reconfiguring our in-house family support service to respond flexibly to individual need in conjunction with commissioning specialist drug services to ensure we have the potential for the most effective interventions for children, young people and their families. (Plymouth)
Improving quality and/or timeliness of assessments	We will continue to manage the child protection process by ensuring quality risk assessments at the point of referral and the swift involvement of families in the assessment process. (Lewisham)
Developing, piloting or implementing of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)	Further strengthen improvements in the identification of children and young people at risk through the development of the lead professional and Common Assessment Framework. (Cumbria)
Developing education and/or training in general	Provide clear child protection guidance, protocols and training for all those working with children and young people with disabilities. (Hounslow)
Maintaining, extending or improving support in general	Develop the Domestic Violence support role of the Safeguarding Service. (Surrey)

Key groups

Over three-quarters of the CYPPs in the sample made reference to key groups, with some plans referencing more than one key group. Overall, 13 different key groups of children and young people were mentioned in relation to safeguarding priorities, actions and targets. Figure 2 presents the main key groups of children and young people that were identified. Other key groups mentioned in relation to safeguarding, although to a much lesser extent, included: asylum seekers, missing from home/runaways, children from challenging families, home-educated children, non-attenders and pregnant women.

Figure 2 Key groups of children and young people identified in relation to safeguarding



Examples of the actions for the most frequently mentioned key groups in relation to safeguarding are presented, in order of frequency, in Table 5.

Table 5 Actions cited for key groups of children and young people

Key group	Example of actions cited
Children and/or families affected by domestic violence and/or abuse (physical and sexual) and/or drug misuse	Introducing and supporting training, such as Talking to My Mum, and liaison initiatives within and between agencies to enable them to provide a consistent and effective response to cases of neglect and domestic violence. (Essex)
'Vulnerable' groups or children in need or children at risk	Safeguarding children at risk – further investment in recruitment and retention of social workers. This is planned to lead to a reduction in requirements for placements, reducing pressure on out of authority spending especially. (Doncaster)
Children on the child protection register	We will continue to manage the child protection process by ensuring quality risk assessments at the point of referral and the swift involvement of families in the assessment process. (Lewisham)
Children with learning difficulties/disabilities	A working group of managers from the statutory and voluntary sectors and a parent are developing a strategy for supporting young people with learning disabilities and sexual behaviour problems, involving curriculum development, support for parents and addressing safeguarding. (Oxfordshire)
LAC/children in care	This is part of a wider strategy to reduce child protection registrations and numbers of LAC placed at a distance from Slough and improve accessibility of services. (Slough)
BME/Faith communities	The percentage of children on the register from ethnic minority groups reflects the broader Dorset population; as the figures are small, they are statistically sensitive. The Dorset Safeguarding Children Board will be monitoring access to services by Black and Minority Ethnic families and children and young people. (Dorset)

Targets

This section discusses the progress made against targets for safeguarding that were set in the 2006 plans and the targets within the 2007 plans.

Progress against targets set in the 2006 plans

The analysis showed that progress against targets set in the 2006 CYPPs is expressed **mostly in numerical terms**. This is characterised by specific numerical statements about improvements (such as levels or percentages), for example:

Whilst we have already achieved the 2010 target of 6.9 per 1000 births, infant mortality rates will remain high on the agenda for the partnership and will be monitored through the Local Safeguarding Children Board Child Death Panels as a requirement of the Children Act 2004. Oldham

Some were numerically quantified change statements, for example:

The percentage of initial assessments completed during the whole year in timescale has improved from 48.7% to 71.4% and core assessments for the year from 51% to 68.9%. Cumbria



Somewhat less frequently, statements were non-numerical, for example, general statements about improvement:

The percentage of re-referrals to Duty has continued to reduce.

Bracknell Forest

Targets within the 2007 plans

The analysis showed that, where mentioned across the CYPPs, targets for measuring progress with regards to safeguarding are **mostly non-numerical in nature**, as characterised by statements referring to ‘improvements’ or ‘reductions’ but without giving any quantification or setting down baselines and projected figures, for example:

Improve the reporting by the Police of incidents of domestic violence where children are involved with an increase in the number of initial assessments undertaken by the County Council.

Essex

Where **numerical targets** are specified, they include **specific numerical statements with a percentage or figure attached**, and those that present a **numerically quantified change statement**, for example:

Percentage of Initial Assessments within 7 days to rise to 75% in 2007/2008.

Plymouth

Re-registration on child protection register: baseline 15.9% as of March 2006. Target 2008 – 12.5%.

Camden

Lead agencies

Overall, fewer than half of the CYPPs identify a lead agent responsible for specified actions. Where they were identified, plans named a range of lead agencies in relation to safeguarding. These are, in order of frequency:

- Local Safeguarding Children’s Board
- Children and Young People’s Service/Children’s Trust
- police
- council
- social services
- domestic abuse or violence forums, both local and national
- voluntary agencies.

Other lead agencies specified in relation to safeguarding, but to a lesser degree, included education, health, Connexions, Hidden Harm Team and Drug and Alcohol Action Team.



4 Looked-after children

Emily Lamont

This section sets out findings of how looked-after children (LAC) feature in the sample of 2007 CYPPs. Where possible it makes comparisons with the 2006 plans and provides illustrative examples. Areas covered are:

- priorities
- actions
- targets.



Overview commentary

Improving outcomes for LAC has been a key priority within ECM developments. Considerable energy has been put into improving provision for LAC during 2006/07 and the intention to continue doing so into 2007/08 has been clearly signalled in the CYPPs examined. Actions are not only about improving provision but also increasingly about early intervention/prevention and the quality and timeliness of assessments. The general impression is one of tightening processes and encouraging the involvement and engagement of young people. A number of actions also imply the continuing need to raise awareness amongst a wide range of partners involved in the lives of LAC. It is illuminating that actions in support of LAC can be found throughout the various themes within CYPPs and across the five outcomes. Perhaps it is slightly surprising that fewer actions have been placed under the 'Achieving economic wellbeing' heading than the other four outcomes. This is also the case with targets, as again there are fewer under this heading. Research suggests that targets for LAC are generally described and used well. Overall, the actions listed suggest that local authorities are trying to develop support for LAC based on careful examination of the particular needs of the cohort of LAC in their locality.

Priorities

The analysis shows that provision for LAC was mentioned as a priority area in six of the 46 plans, each of which contained a separate section focusing on LAC. Within these sections, key priorities were as follows (number of occurrences shown in brackets):

- increasing the participation of LAC in service planning and reviews (6)
- improving placement stability, quality and choice (6)
- improving health and addressing the health needs of LAC (6)
- educational attainment (6)
- multi-agency working to improve support for LAC (4)
- improvements in employment, training and life chances (4)
- training for staff or professionals on issues relating to LAC (2)
- early intervention and prevention (1)
- pathway/transition planning (1).

In the remaining plans, LAC featured across the five outcome areas but were not listed as overall priorities.



- **‘Be healthy’**: LAC were most frequently identified with regards to health assessments and new services or reviews of provision for LAC. Eleven plans did not mention LAC in their ‘be healthy’ outcome.
- **‘Stay safe’**: LAC featured most often with regards to placement stability (in 22 plans), increased placements or services for LAC (in 13), or establishing safe environments for LAC (in 11). Only three plans did not address the needs of LAC in ‘stay safe’.
- **‘Enjoy and achieve’**: LAC featured in ‘enjoy and achieve’ in all but five plans. The majority focused on attainment (29) and attendance (16). Support at school for LAC (for example: educational welfare or mentor support) was also frequently identified in ‘enjoy and achieve’ (12).
- **‘Make a positive contribution’**: Where LAC featured in this outcome it most often concerned their involvement in consultations or service planning (15). Increasing access to cultural/leisure opportunities for LAC (6) and reducing offender rates amongst LAC was also a focus in this outcome. Seven plans did not mention LAC within the ‘make a positive contribution’.
- **‘Achieve economic wellbeing’**: Nineteen plans did not feature LAC in their ‘achieve economic wellbeing’ section. However, where featured, the number of LAC not in education, employment or training (NEET) was the primary focus (11).

Actions

This section looks at the actions completed since 2006 and actions for the future. Across the 46 plans, a variety of actions were specified in relation to LAC.

Actions completed since 2006

Over three-quarters of the 46 plans listed actions they had carried out or achievements since their 2006 plan in relation to LAC. The most common actions are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 Actions completed since 2006 and examples

Action	Example
Developed involvement of, or work with, children and young people	<p>LAC are involved in the Corporate Parenting Panel ensuring their views influence outcomes. (Dorset)</p> <p>We have enabled children with disabilities and LAC to be on the recruitment panels of senior staff in Children, Schools and Families. (Camden)</p>
Maintained, extended and/or improved support to children and young people	<p>A specialist outreach service is working with LAC (Oxfordshire)</p> <p>We have purchased ‘Think Smart’ bullying cards from the ‘Who Cares Trust’ for distribution to looked-after children of secondary school age. (Halton)</p>
Developed collaborations, cross-agency working, coordinated services or partnerships between professionals	<p>The Multi-Agency LAC Steering Group includes senior managers from all relevant agencies and takes a strategic overview of arrangements for LAC and outcomes. (West Berkshire)</p> <p>A new multi-agency team has been set up dedicated to the needs of LAC across the borough. (Bournemouth)</p>



Table 6 Actions completed since 2006 and examples *continued*

Action	Example
Developed or implemented strategies, initiatives or services	<p>We have developed a management strategy in conjunction with partner agencies to review practice and preventative strategies for LAC. (Gateshead)</p> <p>LACES, the Looked-After Children Education Service, has been set up ... their initial focus has been to ensure that all parts of children's services undertake activities to improve outcomes for LAC. (Liverpool).</p>
Developed planning, reviewing, mapping or auditing	<p>This year we have reviewed the corporate parenting panel and strengthened the roles and responsibilities of corporate parents. (Camden)</p> <p>Services for LAC were mapped, in addition, the needs of vulnerable children/young people were considered. (Bracknell Forest)</p>
Developed recruitment and employment practices	<p>A specialist LAC drugs worker has been recruited. (Surrey)</p> <p>Pathways [the LAC team] have recruited an education support worker and post-16 Learning Mentor. (Slough)</p>
Developed and implemented policies, procedures and systems	<p>The advocacy policy is being revised to include a process for LAC and young people to make a complaint should they need to. (Plymouth)</p> <p>Special Guardianship orders are providing a viable alternative to adoption, and kinship placements continue to be a viable and sometimes preferable alternative to adoption. (Brent).</p>
Developed resources	<p>The council has provided additional funding to ensure that newly LAC can be supported to remain at their local school. (Hillingdon)</p> <p>The council has put in a considerable amount of investment (up to £4m) to further improve quality of placements for LAC and to prevent them from becoming looked after. (Brent)</p>
Developed information signposting and/or provision	<p>Information for schools and agencies on managing children with emotional behaviour difficulties has been published. (Swindon)</p> <p>During 2006/7 we gave welfare rights advice for all children leaving care. (Sandwell)</p>
Promoted strategies and initiatives to raise profile or increase awareness	<p>Health of LAC has been promoted. A health promotion event took place in January 2007 which identified ways to improve support. (Bracknell Forest)</p> <p>Healthy eating and healthy lifestyles are promoted in all care settings for looked-after children. (Hertfordshire)</p>

Actions planned for 2007/08

Actions planned for the future that refer to LAC were found in the following sections of the 2007 CYPPs (number of occurrences shown in brackets):

- 'Stay safe' (24)
- 'Enjoy and achieve' (20)
- 'Be healthy' (16)
- 'Make a positive contribution' (13)

- priorities/actions/other sections not specifically related to ECM (9)
- ‘Achieve economic wellbeing’ (8)
- service management (7)
- looked-after children (6)
- introduction/overview or under key achievements (4).

Over two-thirds of the 46 plans set out actions for the future. The ten most common actions are set out in Table 7.

Table 7 Ten most common actions planned for the future

Action	Example
Developing or implementing strategies, initiatives or services	<p>Development of new LAC service: service reorganisation will shortly establish a looked-after children's Service with dedicated teams addressing the needs of children for whom the plan is to remain in care. (Coventry)</p> <p>Develop the placement management service to ensure a positive match between need and provision. (Northamptonshire)</p>
Maintaining, extending and/or improving support to children and young people	<p>High quality personal education plans for all children and young people looked after ... monitored at least annually. (Essex)</p> <p>Focus on greater support and preparation for college for 16 to 20 year olds who find it difficult to sustain employment or finish a college course. (Oxfordshire)</p>
Developing early intervention or prevention	<p>Development and delivery of integrated and targeted early intervention/prevention programmes for those most at risk of under-18-year conceptions, including looked-after children. (Sheffield)</p> <p>Continuing to work on reducing numbers entering the looked-after system by improving, integrating and developing new early intervention systems for children at risk of coming into care. (Manchester)</p>
Involving, or working with, children and young people	<p>Ensure participation of vulnerable young people and those looked after in the Youth Forum. (Swindon)</p> <p>Young people are planning and running an awards ceremony for children in care sponsored by Spurs. (Haringey)</p>
Planning, reviewing, mapping, auditing	<p>Review the case-load weighting system within the Leaving Care Service. (Barnet)</p> <p>The roles and responsibilities of social workers and other staff are to be reviewed and clarified to ensure that discussions take place prior to any changes of placement or school. (Greenwich)</p>
Developing collaborations, cross-agency working, coordinated services or partnerships between professionals	<p>Via the LAC team, support, complement and coordinate, the work of schools, social workers, foster carers, health professionals, education support staff, Connexions and parents/carers in improving educational outcomes for all Bournemouth LAC. (Bournemouth)</p> <p>LAC attainment data to form part of regular schools update meetings with a view to link advisors working with schools and Children and Young People Directorate staff to target particular areas of weakness. (Halton)</p>



Table 7 Ten most common actions planned for the future *continued*

Action	Example
Improving the quality and/or timeliness of assessments	We will ensure that looked-after reviews are completed in the timescales. (Gateshead) Proactive developments include work with the council's leisure services to support older children/young people to access health assessments suited to their needs in a more accessible way. (West Berkshire)
Promoting strategies and initiatives to raise profile or increase awareness	We will raise awareness of private fostering and ensure assessments and services are available to meet these children's needs. (Sandwell) We will promote the use of special guardianship (Bury)
Developing and implementing policies, procedures and systems	All schools to be provided with a self-evaluation tool for attendance. (Dorset) We will develop a system to ensure that LAC receive timely health assessments, dental checks and immunisations. (Gloucestershire)
Developing education/curriculum	For LAC, closer working with residential units will encourage them to offer GCSEs as part of their core curriculum and to continue to offer courses linked to vocational opportunities. (Lewisham) [We will raise the attainment of LAC by] ensuring all LAC have a Personal Education Plan. (Rotherham)

The majority of actions completed since the 2006 plans continue to feature as planned actions in the 2007 plans. However, there are some subtle differences in emphasis. For example, actions relating to resources, recruitment and employment practices and information signposting are referred to as progress since 2006 but are not planned actions for the future. Additionally, in the 2007 plans, attention appears to have shifted to actions relating to early intervention or prevention, improvements to the quality and timeliness of assessments, and to education/curriculum developments. No progress in these areas has been noted since 2006.

Targets

Over three-quarters of the 46 authorities in the sample included in their plans the progress they had made against 2006 targets for LAC. Targets for the coming year regarding LAC were included in over three-quarters of the plans.

Progress against targets set in the 2006 plans

Analysis showed that progress against targets for LAC set in the 2006 CYPPs was expressed **mostly in numerically quantified change statements**, for example:

Careful and sustained work has reduced the proportion of children in care to 89 children per 10,000 population in 2006/07 compared to 96 in 2005/06.

Haringey

Some were **specific numerical statements about improvements** (levels, percentages), for example:

We exceeded our target for the percentage of looked-after children who participated in their statutory reviews by 8.6% and increased the number of children and young people who expressed their views to case conferences by 5%.

Hillingdon

Progress against targets occurred across all five ECM outcomes, but appeared most frequently within the ‘Stay safe’ outcome. Almost twice as many references to progress against targets occurred in ‘Stay safe’ than in the next most common ECM outcome, ‘Enjoy and achieve’. This pattern reflects the targets set out in the 2006 CYPPs, as targets for LAC occurred largely in these two areas. Interestingly, in the 2006 plans, targets for LAC also appeared frequently in the ‘Achieve economic wellbeing’ outcome, but progress against such targets is mentioned least frequently of all the five ECM outcomes in the 2007 plans.

Targets within the 2007 plans

Analysis showed that, where mentioned across the CYPPs, targets for measuring progress with regard to LAC in the coming year were **mostly non-numerical in nature**, characterised by statements referring to ‘improvements’ or ‘reductions’ but without giving any quantification or setting down baselines and projected figures. For example:

Reduce the percentage of LAC issued with final warnings/reprimands and convictions from the youth justice system.

Portsmouth

Targets for measuring progress with regard to LAC in the coming year were found **across all five ECM outcomes**. They appear most frequently within the ‘Stay safe’ outcome and least frequently within the ‘Be healthy’ outcome.

Overall, 16 different targets for the future appear in relation to LAC. The most common of these relate to the attainment of LAC and to the stability of placements for LAC (appearing in just over half of the plans in each case).

These were closely followed by targets relating to the improved health of LAC (appearing in just under half of the plans). Targets relating to increased adoption rates and to increased school attendance were also common, appearing in around one-third of the plans.



Appendix: format and presentation

Catherine Paterson

This section presents the findings from an analysis of 106 CYPPs from 2007 (those available to us at the time of the analysis) with regard to their format and presentation. This analysis was based on a similar study undertaken during the 2006 analysis.

Of the 106 authorities, 24 produced new plans for 2007 and 82 produced reviews. The reviews were given a variety of titles, including (number of documents shown in brackets):

- review (60)
- refresh (7)
- evaluation (4)
- update (3)
- review and refresh (2)
- revised plan (1)
- implementation plan (1).

The 2007 CYPPs were analysed according to the following features:

- layout
- length
- use of images
- use of colour
- display of numerical data.

Layout

In terms of layout, the plans fall quite evenly into two categories. Forty-seven per cent are desktop-published and highly formatted, with a high use of design elements, such as columns, side-bars, call-out boxes and images, while 53 per cent are mainly word-processed, using a single column of text and minimal graphics. These results are similar to those found in 2006, when just under half the plans were desktop-published and just over a half were word-processed.

Length

The plans and reviews were found to vary considerably in length. The average page length was 76 pages (compared to 54 pages in 2006), with the shortest being 12 pages. Six CYPPs have 20 pages or fewer. The longest plan was 316 pages with seven plans having 150 pages or more. The most common length is between 40 and 60 pages. This is the same as in 2006. (Appendices sent separately from the CYPPs were not considered for this analysis.)

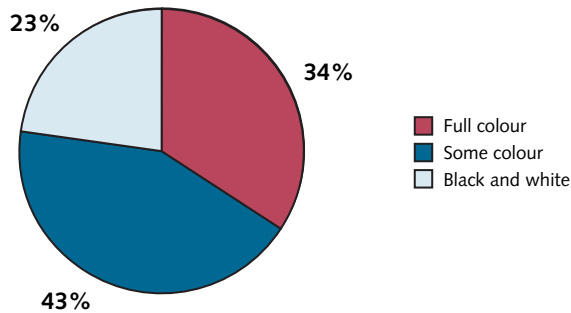
Forty-four of the plans had a high density of words per page (mainly solid text with little or no graphics, typically in a 12 point font). Forty-seven plans have medium density (text with some objects such as images or boxes on some pages) and 15 plans have a low density of words per page (a combination of text and objects on most pages and/or larger fonts).



Use of colour

Seventy-seven per cent of the plans use colour to some extent. This is similar to the findings of 2006. Around a third of those that use colour use it to signpost the structure of the document. Figure 3 shows the different levels of colour usage in the plans.

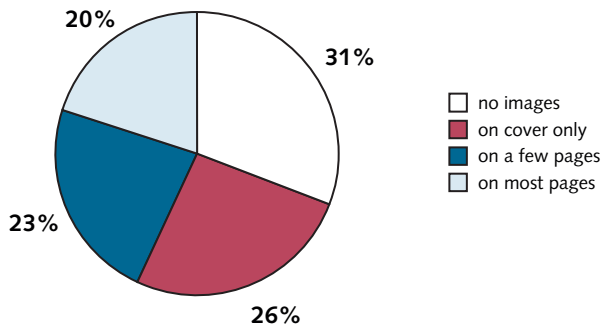
Figure 3 Use of colour in the CYPPs



Use of images

Sixty-nine per cent of the plans use images. In around a quarter of cases where images are used it is to illustrate content, and in almost half of cases they are used solely for branding or design purposes. Figure 4 shows the different levels of use of images in the plans.

Figure 4 Use of images in the CYPPs



Display of numerical data

Nearly all the plans contain some form of numerical data. Forty-five of them display data in a visual, often colour coded form, such as pie charts, and 59 plans use tables or text. Thirteen use both graphs and tables to display data (these are included in the above figures).

Types of plan

Based on a combination of the features analysed above, the plans were divided into three categories and were classified as either 'A', 'B' or 'C' documents, as shown in Figure 5.



Type A (31 plans)

These are full-colour, desk-top published documents with a high content of design elements. Most plans combine a range of these, such as images, call-out boxes, columns, coloured side-bars, graphs and charts. Around half of these plans use colour to signpost the structure, for example: different coloured title pages, coloured side-bars to indicate chapters or sections and different colours used for sections on each ECM outcome. Images are used extensively, whether to illustrate content or as a design feature. A few plans use photographs for both purposes, and a smaller number use photographs without a clear purpose. The most common length of these CYPPs (as in 2006) is 40–60 pages and the average number of pages is 78. Six of the documents have under 40 pages, and seven have over 100. Most have medium to low word density, although one had high word density.

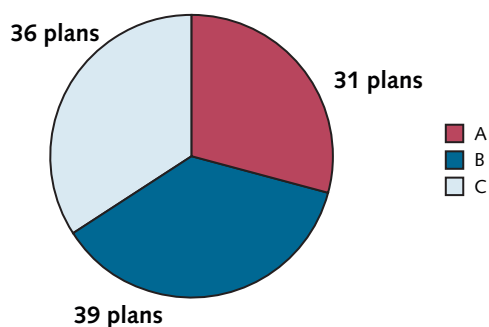
Type B (39 plans)

These make some use of design elements, such as graphs, charts and boxes. Most plans make some use of colour, but this is mainly limited to the front cover, graphs or headings. Some design elements are also used, but generally sparingly. There is some variety in length, with the most common length being over 100 pages. The average length is 83 pages. Most of the plans have medium to high word density, with only one having low word density.

Type C (36 plans)

These are mostly black and white documents with a simple, word-processed style of layout (single column, mostly solid text), and very limited or no use of design elements. If colour is used, it is only in isolated maps or charts. Images are used sparingly, if at all. The most common lengths are under 40 pages or 60–80 pages, with the average being 68 pages. All but one have medium to high word density.

Figure 5 Types of plan



Overall, the average layout and length of plans and reviews in 2007 were similar to those in 2006. However, in 2007, a smaller proportion of plans were type 'A', whilst the proportion of type 'B' and type 'C' documents had both increased.



EMIE has now collected 126 local authority plans and reviews (refreshes/updates/revisions/evaluations) for 2007. Twenty-eight of these authorities have produced new plans. These are as follows:

Barnet
Bolton
Bury
Calderdale
Cumbria
Dorset
Gloucestershire
Havering
Hounslow
Lambeth
Lincolnshire
Middlesbrough
North East Lincolnshire
Nottinghamshire
Peterborough
Portsmouth
Rutland
Sandwell
Shropshire
Solihull
Southend on Sea
Staffordshire
Stockton on Tees
Stoke on Trent
Sunderland
Walsall
Warwickshire
York

These and the reviews collected are available through the CYPP pages of the EMIE website at www.nfer.ac.uk/emie/content.asp?id_content=3557&id_category=157&level=2.

analysis of Children and Young People's Plans 2007

This report presents NFER's analysis of 2007 Children and Young People's Plans, and local authority Reviews of their 2006 plans, from a representative sample of nearly 50 authorities. It is a follow-up to the analysis carried out of the 2006 CYPPs, and adopts a similar approach.

The report aims to provide a picture of how each of the following themes is addressed in the plans, and include illustrative examples:

- commissioning
- safeguarding
- looked after children.

An appendix notes the variety of formats and presentation styles used in the plans/reviews. The aim of the report

is to help local authorities develop their own policy and practice by providing a summary of developments across the country.

The initial analysis was presented at meetings of the *Planning for Excellence* series of regional workshops for local authority planning and strategy officers in December 2007. These meetings are co-promoted by IDeA and EMIE at NFER. Key aspects of the discussions at these meetings are noted in the report, together with a brief commentary by Ian MacGregor, IDeA Associate, who leads the *Planning for Excellence* network.

The project was jointly funded by the Local Government Education and Children's Services Research Programme and the NFER Research Development Fund.

All available CYPPs and reviews are available on the EMIE at NFER website at www.nfer.ac.uk/emie.



National Foundation for Educational Research
The Mere, Upton Park, Slough
Berkshire, SL1 2DQ
Tel: +44 (0)1753 574123 Fax: +44 (0)1753 691632
Email: enquiries@nfer.ac.uk Web: www.nfer.ac.uk

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